

# **Intensive course of Sustainable Logistics, Helsinki**

## **07th – 11th of September, 2009**

My participation to the Sustainable Logistics course started as a coincidence which appeared later to be even a better one. During my business studies in Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, my interest and will to study and understand logistics has increased continuously. This together with the fact that I have always been interested in environmental and sustainability issues indicates that this course was very useful and interesting in my opinion. I was also able to connect this course together with my job in a Finnish shipping company Containerships Ltd, which works for sustainable logistics in its operations.

### **DISTANCE ASSIGNMENTS**

The course started with presentations of the distance assignments by each school. The participating schools were Niels Brock Business College from Denmark, Kaunas College from Lithuania, Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences from Finland and our school Metropolia University of Applied Sciences from Finland. In my opinion, the groups from different schools were in different levels concerning their approach towards logistics. E.g. the Danes had been studying mostly marketing and the Lithuanians hadn't been studying logistics at all before this course. On the other hand, the differences in studies and between cultures gave different aspects for the course.

The Danes had mostly a marketing oriented presentation with a part of an electric car project launched by a company called Better Place. The company aims to reduce global dependency on petroleum through the creation of a market-based transportation infrastructure that supports electric vehicles. Better Place is building its first electric vehicle network in Israel and among its partners has selected Denmark and Hawaii as the other two test markets due to their small size. The electricity needed will be generated by renewable energy from solar arrays and wind farms. Denmark and Israel have enacted policies, which create a tax differential between zero-emission vehicles and traditional cars to accelerate the transition to electric cars. It seems that Denmark is doing important work for sustainable logistics with this project.

The presentations showed also that the Baltic countries and the Scandinavian countries see sustainable logistics quite much in the same way. For example The Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) works to protect the marine environment of the Baltic Sea from all sources of pollution through intergovernmental co-operation between Denmark, Estonia, the European Community, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Sweden. All the HELCOM co-operating countries are lying on the shores of the Baltic Sea. The Baltic Sea and its protection are playing a big role in the view of sustainable logistics because almost all of the sea freight is carried through the Baltic Sea to the countries mentioned above.

The presentations also showed how obvious and important it is to cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions especially in road transport which causes the most of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Improving transport planning and developing truck engines are good examples of what companies can do for cutting the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. On the other hand, for example trains may seem like an environmentally friendly option but the electricity trains use is not necessarily produced in a "green" way.



Port of Helsinki: Vuosaari Harbor

### **MULTINATIONAL GROUP WORK**

The multinational group work went quite well. In the group work the differences between the schools appeared more apparently. Still this was good, because we could have different aspects to the project by putting emphasis both on logistics and marketing.

Our case company was Kuusakoski Ltd which is an international recycling services company. In addition to being the leading recycler of metal-based products in the Northern Europe, Kuusakoski is also recognised as one of the largest suppliers and refiners of recycled metals in the world. Kuusakoski has over 100 service locations in Finland, Baltic countries, China, Great Britain, Poland, Russia, Sweden and Taiwan.

Kuusakoski takes care of the recycling needs of each individual customer, whether they represent industry, trade, offices, construction or consumers. Kuusakoski is specialised in design, manufacture and delivery of recycling machinery and equipment for industrial customers.

We went to Kuusakoski's headquarters and had an interview with the company's logistics manager. He was clearly a professional in the company's domestic logistics, but didn't correspond in international logistics, so we had to do our research about Finnish logistics in the company. Our contact person gave us a presentation about Kuusakoski Ltd and answered to our interview questions appropriately. The visit went well, but it was a pity that we couldn't see anything about the actual recycling process.



Helsinki archipelago sightseeing

## **PRESENTATIONS**

The groups presented their work on the last day of the intensive week. There were quite many similarities between the case companies. All of them, except Association of Packaging Technology and Research (PTR), comply with ISO-standards. ISO14001 environmental standard was the most common standard between the companies, which is good regarding sustainability issues.

Recycling, efficient transport planning, cutting CO2 emissions and technological development were also important issues which rose from the presentations. Kuusakoski is a recycling company and doing its profit only by recycling and PTR is advancing the development in the packaging field with research and information. Instead, the company is a non-profit organisation co-ordinating packaging research in Finland.

In my opinion, DHL stood out from the case companies. Warehousing plays a big role considering sustainable logistics. DHL has launched Neutral Services which cut carbon and costs at O2 warehouse in UK. DHL announced the completion of its first carbon neutral warehouse globally. The project was implemented by DHL through its in-house carbon consultancy, DHL Neutral Services, as part of the Company's industry leading GoGreen Program, which includes a commitment to reduce its carbon by 30.0% by 2020 and improve the cost efficiency of its supply chains.

It was also interesting to know that DHL has been working for the MS Beluga SkySails, the world's first cargo vessel with the innovative SkySails towing kite system. What makes it so special is a new wind propulsion system with a huge towing kite that provides additional thrust for the ship at sea - a sustainable solution for reducing fuel consumption, costs and emissions. This project reminded of the solar, wind and water energy using E/S Orcele Cargo ship, which was presented in the beginning of the week by WWF Finland's Dr. Anita Mäkinen. With these kinds of achievements we can make the world all the time greener and logistics more sustainable.



MS Beluga SkySails

## CONCLUSION

The Sustainable Logistics -intensive week was quite successful. I learned so many new things that it was quite hard to put it all to this learning diary. We had good co-operating companies with hard working students and teachers. Visiting Vuosaari harbor was maybe one of the best experiences during the week, because I haven't been having a chance to visit there after I started to work in Containerships Ltd. In my work in the company I'm all the time in contact with the harbor and its operations. After this intensive week I know many new important things about the harbor because we got quite deep to the harbor's operations during our visit there.

Among all the work there was also relaxing program within the week like the Baltic Fest and the sightseeing cruise to Helsinki archipelago. I would recommend the course to be continued similar in the future. The diploma looks professional and hopefully will be useful during my career in logistics. The course was inclusive: I learned and understood so many different matters and aspects about sustainable logistics that the next time I want to learn something new, I almost have to start to make practices of my own about sustainable logistics. Thank you for the course!